

P.G. #77-12

1893

Site of Niles Chapel (St. Luke's Church) and Cemetery
Leapley Road, Clinton, Md.
Priv/Unocc/Cemetery/Unexposed

Until the late 1970's, a small frame chapel stood beside this cemetery: a typical gable-roofed structure with entrance through double-doors centered, between two pointed-arch windows, in the north gable end. The cemetery is today nearly surrounded by a trailer park on the east edge of Andrews Air Force Base.

In 1867, the Freedmen's Bureau established a school for Blacks near Centreville, on land sold by William Niles, a White landowner. The school opened in 1868, and was also used as a place of worship. In 1877, another small lot near the school was sold to "colored" trustees for the Methodist Church, and a simple (probably log) meeting house was completed before June 1877, when O. Carroll, pastor of the Marlboro Circuit, reported Niles Chapel as one of his four churches. It was replaced in 1893 by the frame structure described above. A small Black community known as Meadows, grew up around Niles Chapel and school. A social lodge was constructed a short distance to the south, and in 1929, a new Black school was erected with Rosenwald funds. In 1942, however, the establishment of Andrews Air Force Base brought the community of Meadows to an end. By the 1970's, Niles Chapel (now called St. Luke's) was vacant; its congregation had merged with another to form Westphalia U.M. Church. Although Niles Chapel is gone, its cemetery marks a significant site: an early Black church and, in fact, a complete post-Civil War Black community, of which scarcely a trace remains.

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Niles Chapel

and/or common St. Luke's Methodist Episcopal Church

2. Location

street & number Leapley Road (9007) ☐ not for publicationcity, town Clinton ☐ vicinity of Meadows ☐ congressional district 4

state Maryland county P.G.

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious cem.
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees of Westphalia U. M. Church

street & number 8511 Westphalia Road telephone no.: 735-9373

city, town Forestville state and zip code Maryland

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P. G. Co. Courthouse liber HB #13

street & number Main Street folio 196

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title P.G. Co. Inventory of Historic Sites

date 1974 ☐ federal ☐ state ☒ county ☐ local

depository for survey records History Division, M-NCPPC

city, town Riverdale state Maryland

7. Description

Survey No. P.G.#77-12

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Nothing stands today on the site of Niles Chapel (St. Luke's Methodist Church). Only the graveyard remains on the eastern edge of the church lot. Until the late 1970's, a small frame chapel stood on this site. It was a typical gable-roofed structure, with entrance through double-doors centered (between two pointed-arched windows) in the north gable end. At the south gable end was a lower apse. The east and west facades were three-bays in length, with pointed-arch windows like those flanking the entrance. The cornerstone indicated 1893 as the date of construction.

The cemetery lot is today nearly surrounded by a trailer-park on the east edge of Andrews Air Force Base.

8. Significance

Survey No. P.G. 77-12

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				Black History

Specific dates 1893 Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The history of the earliest Black schools in Prince George's County is usually very closely tied to that of the local churches, and that is certainly true in the case of Niles Chapel (St. Luke's Church). Before the Civil War, local Blacks worshipped at the Centreville Methodist Church (which would become Forest Grove Church, and then Chapel #1 at Andrews Air Force Base), but after the war, as in other areas, they sought their own place of worship. At the same time, in 1867, the Freedmen's Bureau was in the process of establishing a school for Blacks in the Centreville area. William Niles, a white landowner donated one acre of his land south of Centreville (on the road to the Woodyard) to himself and four freedmen as trustees of a school to be erected "for the use of Blacks forever and for playgrounds and general accommodations of the School."¹ The school was opened in 1868, and worship services were probably conducted in this school building until Niles Chapel was built in the 1870's.

In February of 1878, 3/4 of an acre was legally conveyed to John and George Shorter and Sandy Forrest, "Colored" trustees for the Methodist Church, out of the estate of William P. Pumphrey.² Pumphrey had actually sold the lot to the trustees before his death early in 1877, and the chapel was completed before June 1877, when O. Carroll, pastor of the Marlboro Circuit recorded Niles Chapel as one of his four churches.³ This first chapel was probably a modest log structure; it was replaced in 1893 by the frame structure described in #7.

Over the years, a small Black community grew up in the area of Niles Chapel and the old schoolhouse. A lodge or social hall was constructed early in the 20th century a short distance south of the church, on the opposite side of the private road. Then in 1929, a new school for Black children was constructed with Rosenwald Funds on a two-acre lot between the church and the "colored hall"; making the little community complete. This community (known as Meadows)

was, however, very short-lived, for the Declaration of Taking by the United States in 1942 (for the establishment of Andrews Air Force Base) spelled its doom.⁴ The social hall and the Rosenwald School were destroyed, and the membership of Niles Chapel (by now, St. Luke's) was necessarily decreased. By the 1970's St. Luke's Church stood vacant, and its congregation had merged with another to form the present Westphalia U.M. Church. Although St. Luke's Church is now gone, the cemetery remains to mark a significant site: of an early Black church, and in fact, a complete post-Civil War community, of which scarcely a trace remains.

NOTES:

1. P.G. Co. Deed HB #1:100
2. P.G. Co. Deed HB #13:196
3. P.G. Co. Deed HB #12:425
4. Archives, P. G. Public Schools

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G. 77-12

P.G. Co. Deeds: HB #1:100; HB #12:425; HB #13:196

Washington Conference of Methodist Churches, 1867 - 1888

Archives, P.G. Public Schools, Plant Maintenance Dept. Upper Marlboro
Freedmen's Bureau Records, 1868

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl

organization History Division

date May 1983

street & number 4811 Riverdale Road

telephone 779-2011

city or town Riverdale

state Maryland 20737

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

16 #77-12

1702624608

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM for the

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME St. Luke's M.E. Church				
2. LOCATION				
STREET AND NUMBER: Leapley Road				
CITY OR TOWN: Clinton				
STATE: Maryland		COUNTY: Prince George's		
3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Bath		<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
		Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
				Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. PROPERTY TYPE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Vacant				
5. OWNER'S NAME Trustees of St. Luke's Methodist Church				
STREET AND NUMBER:				
CITY OR TOWN:		STATE:		
6. LOCATION OF DEED DESCRIPTION Prince George's County Courthouse				
STREET AND NUMBER:				
CITY OR TOWN:		STATE:		
Upper Marlboro		Maryland		
7. REFERENCE OF CURRENT DEED (Book & Pg. #):				
8. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS				
TITLE OF SURVEY: None				
DATE OF SURVEY:				
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local				
9. OTHER NOTES:				
CITY OR TOWN:				
		STATE:		

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building is a one story, frame structure with a three bay gable end facade. The square-headed door is flanked by pointed arched windows with 2/2 double hung sash. The sidewalls have three pointed arch windows. The apse is rectangular with three windows.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE**PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)**☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century**SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)** 1893 (Cornerstone)**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)****Aboriginal**☐ Prehistoric☐ Historic☐ Agriculture☐ Architecture☐ Art☐ Commerce☐ Communications☐ Conservation☐ Education☐ Engineering☐ Industry☐ Invention☐ Landscape☐ Architecture☐ Literature☐ Military☐ Music☐ Political☐ Religion/Phi-

lasophy

☐ Science☐ Sculpture☐ Social/Human-

itarian

☐ Theater☐ Transportation☐ Urban Planning☐ Other (Specify)**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreage Justification:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Christopher Owens, Park Historian

ORGANIZATION

M-NCPPC

DATE

6 Aug 74

STREET AND NUMBER:

8787 Georgia Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:

Silver Spring

STATE

Maryland

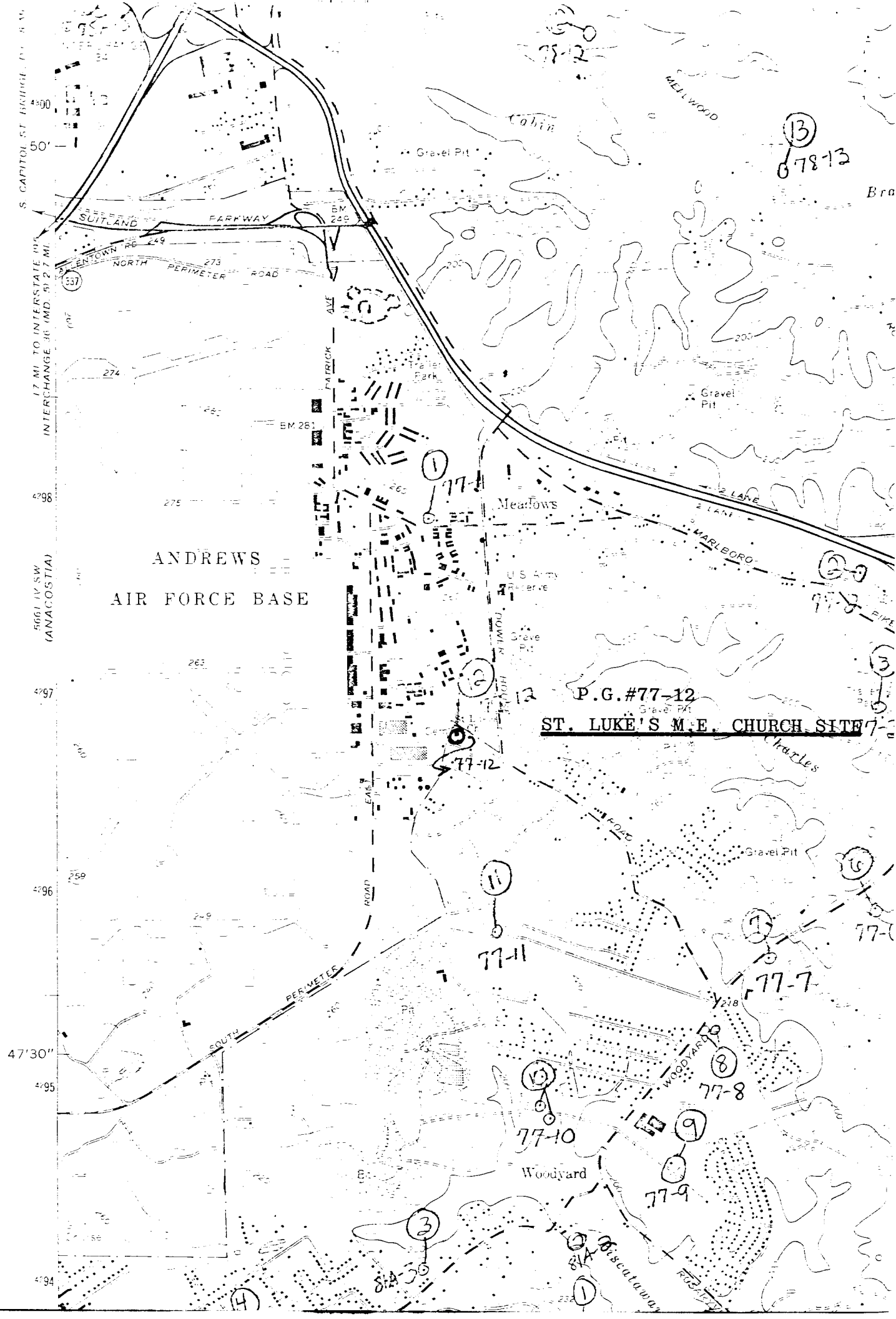
12.

State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Signature





P. G. #77-12

St. Luke's Cemetery
Prince George's County, Md.
Susan G. Pearl
March 1983
View to north
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.



NAME ST. LUKES CHURCH #77-12

LOCATION LEAPLEY Rd MELWOOD, Md (BORDER OF ANDREWS AFB)

FACADE NW

PHOTO TAKEN 8/6/74 MDWYER